

**Content Standard 6: Students will make connections between theatre, other disciplines and daily life.**

**Grades K-4**

**Students will:**

- describe visual, aural, oral and kinetic elements in theatre, dance, music and visual arts;
- compare how ideas and emotions are expressed in theatre, dance, music and visual arts;
- select movement, music or visual elements to enhance the mood of a classroom dramatization;
- identify connections between theatre and other disciplines in the curriculum; and
- identify various careers available to theatre artists.

**Grades 5-8**

**Students will:**

- describe characteristics and compare the presentation of characters, environments and actions in theatre, musical theatre, dance and visual arts;
- incorporate elements of dance, music and visual arts to express ideas and emotions in improvised and scripted scenes;
- express and compare personal reactions to several art forms;
- describe and compare the functions and interaction of performing artists, visual artists and audience members in theatre, dance, music and visual arts;
- describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of theatre and other disciplines taught in school are interrelated;
- explain how social concepts such as cooperation, communication, collaboration, consensus, self-esteem, risk-taking, sympathy and empathy apply in theatre and daily life; and
- explain the knowledge, skills and discipline needed to pursue careers and avocational opportunities in theatre.

**Grades 9-12**

**Students will:**

- describe and compare the materials, elements and means of communicating in theatre, dance, music and the visual arts;
- determine how the nondramatic art forms are modified to enhance the expression of ideas and emotions in theatre;
- illustrate the integration of arts media in informal or formal presentations;
- create and solve interdisciplinary problems using theatre; and
- explore career opportunities in theatre and theatre-related fields.

**Content Standard 7: Students will analyze, critique and construct meanings from works of theatre.**

**Grades K-4**

**Students will:**

- a. identify and describe the visual, aural, oral and kinetic elements of classroom dramatizations and dramatic performances;
- b. explain how the wants and needs of characters are similar to and different from their own;
- c. articulate emotional responses to and explain personal preferences about whole dramatic performances, as well as parts of those performances; and
- d. analyze classroom dramatizations and, using appropriate terminology, constructively suggest (1) alternative ideas for dramatizing roles, arranging environments and developing situations and (2) means of improving the collaborative processes of planning, playing, responding and evaluating.

**Grades 5-8**

**Students will:**

- a. describe and analyze the effect of publicity, study guides, programs and physical environments on audience response and appreciation of dramatic performances;
- b. articulate and support the meanings constructed from dramatic performances;
- c. use articulated criteria to describe, analyze and constructively evaluate the effectiveness of artistic choices in dramatic performances; and
- d. describe and evaluate the effectiveness of students' contributions (as playwrights, actors, designers and directors) to the collaborative process of developing improvised and scripted scenes.

**Grades 9-12**

**Students will:**

- a. construct social meanings from informal and formal productions from a variety of cultures and historical periods, and relate to current personal, national and international issues;
- b. articulate and justify personal aesthetic criteria for critiquing dramatic texts and events by comparing artistic intent with the final performance;
- c. analyze and critique performances and constructively suggest alternative artistic choices; and
- d. constructively evaluate their own and others' collaborative efforts in informal and formal productions.

**Content Standard 8: Students will demonstrate an understanding of context by analyzing and comparing theatre in various cultures and historical periods.**

**Grades K-4**

**Students will:**

- a. identify and compare similar characters and situations in stories and dramas from and about various cultures, create classroom dramatizations based on these stories and dramas, and discuss how theatre reflects life; and
- b. identify and compare the various cultural settings and reasons for creating dramas and attending theatre.

**Grades 5-8**

**Students will:**

- a. describe and compare universal characters and situations in dramas from and about various cultures and historical periods, create improvised and scripted scenes based on these universal characters and situations, and discuss how theatre reflects a culture;
- b. analyze the emotional and social impact of dramatic events in their lives, in the community and in other cultures; and
- c. explain how culture affects the content and design element of dramatic performances.

**Grades 9-12**

**Students will:**

- a. compare similar themes in drama from various cultures and historical periods, create informal and formal performances using these themes, and discuss how theatre can reveal universal concepts;
- b. identify and compare the lives, works and influence of representative theatre artists in various cultures and historical periods;
- c. identify cultural and historical sources of American theatre and musical theatre; and
- d. analyze the effect of their own cultural experiences on their dramatic work.

## ILLUSTRATIVE LEARNING/ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES WITH SCORING DIMENSIONS

The following sample learning/assessment activities are intended to illustrate how the standards may be taught and assessed in a classroom. Some of the instructional and assessment sequences emphasize a particular content standard; others are deliberately designed to address multiple standards. Opportunities for assessment are provided within each instructional sequence. Collectively, these activities are designed to demonstrate the following important principles:

- Series of well-designed instructional activities typically address more than one standard. While it is often desirable to break instruction into discrete chunks to focus on specific skill or knowledge areas, the most interesting and effective instruction recognizes and exploits the fact that the standards are interrelated. As pointed out in the common introduction to this chapter, having students carry out several steps of an artistic process necessarily addresses several content standards. This enables teachers to cover, and students to make connections among, broader ranges of learning. [Note: Although each illustrative activity requires students to apply learning from many, if not all, of the content standards, only those content standards which are actually *assessed* are listed.]
- Opportunities for assessment grow naturally out of well-designed sequences of instruction, rather than occurring as add-ons after the end of such a sequence. Such assessments, which are built into instructional sequences, often are referred to as “embedded” assessments.
- The dimensions of assessment (attributes of the student work which are assessed) always should be linked to, and derive naturally from, the content and performance standards that the instructional sequence is designed to address. In other words, what is assessed should be what teachers had hoped that students would learn.

The following table is designed to assist readers in finding illustrative learning/assessment activities for particular content standards and grade levels. A teacher looking for an example of how content standard 4 might be addressed at Grade 8 should find the number 4 in the Content Standard column, then follow that row over to the Grade 8 column to find the letter(s) of the learning assessment activity(s). Each illustrative learning/assessment activity is presented in alphabetical order.

### GUIDE TO FINDING ILLUSTRATIVE ACTIVITIES AT DIFFERENT GRADE LEVELS

Content Standard	Illustrative Learning Activities		
	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 12
1	I, K	A, I, K	I, K
2	I, J	I, J	B, I, J
3		C	
4		D	
5	G, K	K	E, K
6	F, K	H, K	K
7	J, K	A, H, J, K	B, J, K
8			E

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*Illustrative Learning/Assessment Activity A (Grades 5-8)*

- Content Standard 1:** Students will create theatre through improvising, writing and refining scripts.
- Performance Standards:**
- a. individually and in groups, develop characters, environments and actions that create tension and suspense
  - b. refine and record dialogue and action
- Content Standard 7:** Students will analyze, critique and construct meanings from works of theatre.
- Performance Standard:**
- d. describe and evaluate the effectiveness of students' contributions (as playwrights, actors, designers and directors) to the collaborative process of developing improvised and scripted scenes

**Learning Activity.** Working in pairs, students build a structured improvisation based on the idea of suspense – two people waiting for something awful to happen. The scene can be funny or scary. They are instructed to build mood, atmosphere and tension by manipulating their voices (quality, tone and volume) and timing (planned pauses and changes in the speed of delivery). The students decide on the events, characters and context for their scene and develop the scene through improvisation. They perform these scenes for their peers, after which – guided as necessary by teacher questions – the class provides constructive comments on each performance. The students then record their work for other actors by scripting the scene and incorporating stage directions which detail events, characters and context.

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*Illustrative Learning/Assessment Activity B (Grades 9-12)*

- Content Standard 2:** Students will act by developing, communicating and sustaining characters.
- Performance Standards:**
- a. analyze the physical, emotional and social dimensions of characters found in dramatic texts from various genres and media
  - b. compare and demonstrate acting techniques and methods from a variety of periods and styles
  - c. in an ensemble, create and sustain characters
- Content Standard 7:** Students will analyze, critique and construct meanings from works of theatre.
- Performance Standard:**
- c. analyze and critique performances and constructively suggest alternative artistic choices

**Learning Activity.** Students study acting techniques over a period of weeks through demonstrations, lectures, exercises, videos, assignments and viewing, performing and discussing scenes. As a culminating activity for the unit, students are asked to perform scenes that demonstrate their ability to analyze text and translate that text into believable characters, using appropriate acting techniques (voice, movement, blocking, props, costumes, makeup). The students then critique the scenes in discussion with the teacher and peers, based on the above criteria.

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*Illustrative Learning/Assessment Activity C (Grades 5-8)*

**Content Standard 3:** Students will design and produce the technical elements of theatre through artistic interpretation and execution.

**Performance Standards:**

- a. describe and use the relationship among scenery, properties, lighting, sound, costumes and makeup in creating an environment appropriate for the drama
- b. analyze improvised and scripted scenes for technical requirements

**Learning Activity.** After learning the principles of ground-plan design, including drawing to scale, students choose scripts (scenes, one-act plays, full-length plays) from a teacher-selected pool. The students read and discuss the scenes and determine the needs of the scene for a realistic presentation. They then design a ground plan for their realistic scene/play, which is drawn to scale and uses correct symbols for walls, windows, doors, platforms and steps.

**Possible Extension.** Students draw the set from the perspective of the audience and explain how the set reflects the ethnic background, culture and environment of their characters.

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*Illustrative Learning/Assessment Activity D (Grades 5-8)*

**Content Standard 4:** Students will direct by planning or interpreting works of theatre and by organizing and conducting rehearsals.

**Performance Standard:**

- a. demonstrate social, group and consensus skills by leading small groups in planning visual and aural elements and in rehearsing improvised and scripted scenes

Content standard 4 requires students to play the role of director by planning and staging scripted and unscripted scenes. They should be able to use good communication skills to rehearse and improve the performance of actors. They should be able to explain and justify the reasoning behind their stage decisions.

**Learning Activity.** The teacher introduces a generic (nonspecific) dialogue of eight pairs of lines for two actors and demonstrates how such scripts, through different readings, can be interpreted to have different meanings. Through guided discussion, students brainstorm possible contexts for the scene.

The teacher then provides the students with a different generic script. Each student works individually to plan the scene in terms of context, event and characters; then plans the stage moves which the two actors will make. Students write their stage directions onto the script using appropriate abbreviations. They then work in threes, taking turns directing their scenes while the other two students function as actors. The teacher circulates, evaluating the extent to which students use the communication skills required to rehearse and improve their peers' acting performances.

As the scenes are presented, the class discusses the success of each scene based on organization and interpretation. Students must be able to explain and support the reasoning behind their interpretations and stage decisions.